DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 207 541 IR 009 652

TITLE Conference Planning Manual.
INSTITUTION Vermont Library Association, Burlington.
PUB DATE 80
NOTE 38p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Conferences; Guidelines; *Library Associations; *Meetings; *Planning

ABSTRACT

Intended as a useful aid for organizing its annual spring meeting, this general conference planning manual developed by the Vermont Library Association provides a blueprint for planners on the responsibilities of the planning committee, the conference chair, and others; site selection and local arrangements; program and sessions planning; arrangements for exhibits and exhibitors; considerations of financing, hospitality, and publicity; preparation and distribution of information packets and handouts; and provisions for evaluation. Schedules, inquiry sheets, planning forms, and checklists are included. (RAA)

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CONFERENCE PLANNING MANUAL

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CONFERENCE PLANNING MANUAL

This manual is the property of the Vermont library community and there are few copies in existence. Please return it to the conference chairperson of the conference you helped plan so that it may be passed on to the conference committee for the following year. It is not copyrighted or restricted in any way -- you are encouraged to make copies of any pages you want to keep and return the original intact.

This manual was originally prepared by an Ad Hoc Committee of the Vermont Library Association in 1979 and 1980. The members of the Committee were:

Marnie Kneeland - Chairperson, Representing VEMA

Josette Boisse - Vermont ALA Counselor

Albert Stevens - Representing VLTA

Joyce Drew - 1979 Conference Chairperson

Ellen Yahn - 1980 Conference Chairperson

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FOREWORD

This manual is intended as a useful aid in planning the Annual Spring Conference. Each chair and committee will want to plan their conference in their own way, but it is often helpful to know what has been done in the past and what has worked well.

Vermont librarians should have no trouble accessing the available books and manuals on conference planning, so this manual will deal mainly with those aspects which are unique to the Annual Spring VLA (Vermont Library Association), VLTA (Vermont Library Trustees Association), VEMA (Vermont Educational Media Association) Conference.

This manual is prepared in a loose-leaf binder so that changes or additions can be made easily. It is hoped that after each conference the chair will collect all copies of the manual from committee members and will add any relevant information or material to each before passing the manuals on to the chair of the next conference.

THE COMMITTEE

The VLA bylaws provide for the Executive Board of VLA to appoint a chair for the annual conference and to allow that person to choose the other members of the committee in consultation with the other sponsoring organizations and their sections. This works well because it allows the chair to form a committee that s/he knows will work well together. The chair could be a member of VLA, VLTA or VEMA.

The chair should be chosen over one year in advance so that s/he can meet with the previous committee and begin making contacts. This cannot be overemphasized. The best time to start getting ready for next year's conference is at this year's conference. The key people are all there in one place, the interest and spirit are at the high point for the year, and things that have gone right or wrong are fresh in everyone's mind.

The conference planning committee is usually composed of the chair, the previous year's chair, the local arrangements person, the exhibitor's representative, the VLTA, VEMA and VLA representaives, and two or three other members. Consideration should be given to including the chair of the following year's conference as soon as that person is appointed, someone such as a Department of Libraries or Department of Education staff person, or library organization officer who has wide contact with many different libraries and can help define the current needs and concerns of the Vermont library community, and VLA section chairs. The chair must balance the advantages of having a small, hard-working committee against those of having a larger committee with representatives from all parts of the state. Persons to handle facilities hospitality, reservations, publicity and packet preparation are necessary. Committee members may serve more than one function.

The best decisions of the conference committee will be those on which concensus exists. Every effort should be made to arrive at concensus. Cooperation and consideration of all interests are essential. No handbook can guarantee a good conference. Cooperation can.

CONFERENCE CHAIR

The conference chair is responsible for the overall running of the conference. The following are among the duties which must be delegated or performed in order for the conference to be successful:

1. Select conference committee
2. Set up schedule of committee meetings and chair those meetings
3. Assign responsibility for exhibits, packet, local arrangements, hospitality, publicity, reservations, and registration
4. Coordinate program planning with the agreed upon budget
5. Approve all bills for payment
6. Evaluate the conference and update this handbook if necessary
7. Prepare a written report for the Executive Boards of VEMA, VLA, VLTA.

VLA, VLTA AND VEMA

The custom has been that the Annual Conference is a joint endeavor of VLA, VLTA and VEMA. Any change in this procedure should be taken up by all the Executive Boards and given very careful consideration. A great deal of effort has been expended through the years to build up a good working relationship among all elements of the Vermont library community, and these efforts should not be negated or hampered because of thoughtlessness or personality clashes in one year's conference committee.

One of the first duties of the conference chair should be to write to the Presidents of the Associations, notifying them that a committee is being formed and requesting that they suggest a representative. (VEMA bylaws designate the Vice President.) It is not appropriate for the Conference chair to simply select a trustee or school librarian and assume that that person will represent his/her organization. This bypasses the officers and leaves a communications gap.

Any mailing, promotional, or public relations material about the Conference should feature the names or initials of all three organizations prominently displayed, using the same size letters and otherwise avoiding any favoritism or distinction among the three.

TIME LINE

TIME PRIOR TO CONFERENCE DATE	PERSON	TASK
14 months (March)	VLA Executive Board	Appoints chair
13 months (April)	Chair	Writes to Presidents of VLA, VLTA and VEMA requesting that they suggest representatives for the Committee. Contacts the chair of the current conference and arranges to be present at meetings, etc. Determines make-up of conference committee.
12 months (May)	VLTA and VEMA Presidents VLA Section Presidents VLA President	Suggests members for planning committee.
	Chair	Attends conference, gathering ideas, talking with prospective committee members - tentative dates and location. Arranges date for first conference committee meeting and notifies members. Appoints exhibitors' representative.
11 months (June)	Chair	Attends first VLA Executive Board meeting after the conference, part of which is usually devoted to reports and critique of the conference. The chair of the just completed conference should be present also, and should turn over updated copies of this manual to the new chair.
10 months (July)	Chair	Appoints local arrangements person, and those to handle hospitality, reservations, exhibits, and packet. Prepares ROUGH budget. Holds first conference committee meeting.

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TIME LINE
(continued)

TIME PRIOR TO CONFERENCE DATE	PERSON	TASK
10 months (July)	Conference Committee	Brainstorms ideas for theme, speakers, workshops, entertainment, exhibitors, etc. Sets dates.
	Local Arrangements Person	Confirms arrangements for dates, etc. with facility owner and reports to chair.
8 months (Sept.)	Conference Committee	Works out tentative schedule based on programs as proposed (considering that alternatives may be substituted). Finalizes theme. Designs logo. Determines policies for payment for speakers, exhibit charges, registration fees.
6 months (Nov.)	Program Planners	Have firm programs, descriptions, biographical information ready for program packet. Have firm costs including participant's charge fees, mileage and/or need meals and overnight accommodations.
	Local Arrangements Person	Have facility costs.
	Conference Committee	Have firm schedule of events, entertainment and speakers.
	Exhibitors' Representative	Notifies exhibitors of upcoming conference.
5 months (Dec.)	Chair	Selects someone to handle publicity.
	Publicity Person	Sends notices to professional journals.

TIMELINE
(continued)

TIME PRIOR TO CONFERENCE DATE	PERSON	TASK
4 months (Jan.)	Conference Committee	Meets to review all details for packet.
3 months (Feb.)	Chair	Sends all information to typist for conference packet. Prepares or approves flyer to send to all libraries in state. Sends brochure to printer - determines amount needed. Add map and College public relations information.
2 months (March)	Hospitality Person	Begins duties described previously. Packets mailed - end of month.
1 month (April)	Chair	Checks on all details with every committee member.

TIME LINE
(continued)

AT CONFERENCE	PERSON	TASK
May	Chair	Pursue all details. Solves problems which arise. Is particularly conscious of people's feelings.

AFTER CONFERENCE	PERSON	TASK
June	Treasurer	Pays all bills.
	Chair	Completes evaluations. Writes report for Executive Board of sponsoring organization (to be presented at first meeting following conference).
	Program Planners	Write thank you notes to program presenters.

LIST OF CONFERENCES

DATE	LOCATION	CHAIR	REMARKS
1972 April 21-22	Stratton Mountain Inn	Joe Popecki	1st joint conference
1973 April 27-28	Sugarbush Inn	Joe and Josette Boissee	
1974 May 23-25	Green Mountain College	Doug Durkee E. Marsh	IF pre-conference
1975 May 22-23	Green Mountain College	Meris Eggert	
1976 May 26-28	Green Mountain College	Penny Pillsbury	Pre-conference on women
1977 May 25-27	Green Mountain College	Ginny Watson	
1978 May 24-26	Green Mountain College	Ann Turner	
1979 May 23-25	Green Mountain College	Joyce Drew	Pre-conference on computers
1980 May 22-23	Green Mountain College	Ellen Yahn	

SITE SELECTION

In 1979 a site selection committee was formed to find an alternative site to Green Mountain College in the northern part of the state. If such a committee is necessary in the future, consideration should be given to meeting, eating, sleeping and exhibit space. Costs should be investigated and obtained in a form which makes it easy to compare the different sites. The value of an easily accessible versus a secluded retreat-type setting should be considered. A representative of exhibitors must be included on the committee. The form on the next page used by NEEMA (New England Educational Media Association) to collect this sort of information, could be adapted for future use.

The Executive Boards of VLA, VEMA and VLTA should agree upon the conference site.

NEEMA

NEW ENGLAND EDUCATIONAL MEDIA ASSOCIATION

Conference Center _____ Address _____

_____

This inquiry seeks to ascertain some possible annual conference sites for the New England Educational Media Association, which annually brings together between 300 and 400 school librarians and media specialists and 100 to 200 exhibitor personnel, not to mention another dozen or so speakers. We meet for three days each year, always the first Thursday, Friday, and Saturday in May, so the first prerequisite is that your site be available on those dates. The second is that you be able on site to sleep 400 persons, have a dining room capable of feeding 500 at a sitting although most meals will draw lower than 350. Please do us the assistance of returning the questionnaire even if you can't fill our requirements, since some of our smaller workshops each year may find your site useful.

PLEASE FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. On site or immediately adjacent, not requiring transportation, are you able to sleep 400 persons? ___ 300 ___ 200 ___

2. Do you have a dining room capable of feeding 500 at a single sitting? ___ 400 ___ 300 ___ 200 ___ 100 ___

3. For a conference bringing in 300 persons staying overnight two nights and three days, what are your charges for room and board, including one nights lodging and three meals, tax, tip, for your mid-range meals, and double occupancy?

   _____ Please quote according to the criteria outline, since it gives us a basis for comparison.

4. Do you allow other transients into your site when a conference the size described is going on? _____

5. Do you have exhibit space totaling 8800 square feet? ____ If more, how much? _____ If less, how much? _____

6. Assuming we need the dining space, are it and the exhibit space you noted in No. 5 separate and different places? _____

7. MEETING ROOMS: List the number of meeting rooms available, and the capacity of each. Do not include spaces already listed above for exhibit space and dining space. Include a separate enclosure if needed.

8. Do you have available 200 tables not used for dining 8 feet long and 3 feet deep? ___ Do you charge for their set up and use? _____ If yes, how much? _____

9. In the exhibit space, referred to in No. 5, how many electrical outlets are available? _____ Is there a charge for electrical use by exhibitors? _____ If so, how much per outlet provided? _____

10. Is there a charge for the use of meeting rooms referred to in No. 7? _____

    If yes, how much for each per day? _____

11. Can the exhibit space referred to in No. 5 be securely locked up? ____ If not, do you charge for security? _____ How Much? _____

12. How large a lounge and dancing area, not already included in exhibit or otherwise used space, do you have in seating capacity? _____ Do you provide musical groups for dancing? _____ At what cost per night? _____

13. How many days or weeks before the conference are you able to receive and store shipments for both the conference programs and exhibits? _____

    Any charge for this service? _____ How much? _____

14. Can exhibitors set up the day before the conference begins? _____ The night before beginning at 6:30 p.m.? _____ Any charge for this early set-up? _____

LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS PERSON

Someone who lives or works physically near the conference site should serve as local arrangements person. Ideally, the person would be familiar with the site and with VLA, VLTA and VEMA members in the area. This person coordinates details of rooms, meals, meeting rooms, AV equipment, parking and recreation with the management of the conference facility.

A. Must be on the conference committee. The person may be someone who is on the committee by virtue of his/her other affiliation (VLA, VLTA or VEMA section representative) or someone selected specifically for this work.

B. Reservations - What are the costs? Are they firm? What is included for this price (e.g. linens)? Are costs for what rooms are used or meals served or for tentative reservation numbers (e.g. do we pay for "no-shows")? Define our responsibilities and those of the management. Aim to have the management handle reservations.

Expect this to take about 50 hours work in advance of the conference, including the following:

1. Appoint someone to handle reservations.

2. Obtain a floor plan of each sleeping area.

3. Determine the need for assigning bathrooms by sex and coordinating room assignments accordingly.

4. Design reservation forms both to go into packets and for record keeping. (Sample used by Green Mountain is included in this booklet.) Add a place to request a receipt, and to indicate membership in sponsoring organizations.

5. Devise a system to honor choice of roommates and to assign them for those who do not have one.

6. Reserve first floor or elevator-accessible accommodations for those with handicaps.

7. Determine the date by which a tentative room and meals count is due the facility manager.

8. Make arrangements to handle those who arrive without reservations.

9. Be sure reservations have been made for guests, speakers, etc., and that finances for these have been taken care of.

10. Prepare meal tickets. A different color for each meal is helpful. (A sample is included here.) Number the tickets to keep an accurate count.

11. Check with food service director to see how many meals over the tentative reservation number can be sold.

12. Devise a way to accommodate those who change their reservations - more or fewer overnights or meals - and to keep track of those changes for bookkeeping purposes.

13. Arrange for people to staff the reservation and/or registration desks. Consideration should be given to expected rush hours.

14. Have change available.

15. Make arrangements for the security of the money.

16. Make arrangements for reconciling accounts with the treasurer and the facility management.

C. Meals

1. Obtain possible menus and costs for all meals for consideration by conference committee. Committee may want to determine only the price range and leave the specifics up to the local arrangements person. Menus should be varied.

2. Arrange meals for those with special dietary restrictions.

3. Decide the "smoking/no smoking at meals" issue.

D. Bar - Make arrangements for cash bar when scheduled. This may be as simple as contacting the facility manager, or as complex as hiring bartenders, getting an advance to purchase supplies, and arranging for glassware, tables, bar chits, and someone to sell chits.

E. Recreation - Contact facility manager to arrange for participants' use of recreational facilities -- tennis courts, pool with lifeguard, etc.

F. Runners - Enlist the aid of two people (students) to act as errand runners, name tag typers, babysitters, projectionists, etc.

G. Registration

1. Encourage pre-registration, perhaps by offering a discount.

2. Assign one person to handle registration desk whenever the reservation desk is open.

3. Determine whether name tag is admission ticket to meetings. If so, who will check? What will be done if a person is without a tag? Will that include exhibitors?

4. Type name tags in advance for those who pre-register and place them in reservation envelope. If tags are not used as admission tickets, people can make their own as they arrive.

5. Arrange to have someone type name tags for those not pre-registered as they arrive.

6. Obtain registration book with place for name and columns for VLA, VLTA, VEMA, Guests, Exhibitors, Non-members and amount paid. It is important that people check all categories that apply.

7. Obtain up-to-date membership lists from each of the three sponsoring organizations. People think they are members when they have not paid current dues. This list should be checked for each person registered. Check to see if organizations have made arrangements for member rates for members of organizations in neighboring states.

8. Arrange to have membership chair of each organization give receipt or membership card to those who pay their dues at the conference. Having membership table near the registration desk is helpful.

9. Obtain a list of host(s) for each guest from the hospitality person in case the guest arrives at the registration desk before meeting host.

H. Meeting rooms

1. Insure that AV equipment specified by program planners is available for programs, have extra available in case specification is incorrect, consider the need for PA systems.

2. Work with program planners to fit anticipated audience and program into must suitable rooms. Convey needs to facility manager. Consider AV use, lecturn, lighting, seating flexibility, size of room and anticipated audience, kind of program.

3. Have program planners check to be sure lighting, tables, chairs, water, etc., are set up for programs. Arrange a means by which snags of this nature can be solved quickly.

4. Be aware of the possibilities available should a larger than anticipated audience turn up for a small room. Make program planners aware of alternatives.

PROGRAM PLANNING

A wide variety of librarians, library trustees and others interested in libraries will attend the Annual Conference, and no one program will please everyone. The best policy seems to be to plan a wide variety of different types of overlapping programs and activities so that at any given time most people will find something that interests them. Holding too close to one theme or type of program can cause problems in this regard. In spite of this, having programs relating loosely to a particular theme is helpful.

All those parts of the program which are included in the promotional material and open free to all conference registrants are planned and paid for out of the general conference budget. This includes speakers, workshops, films, puppet shows, dances, etc. Occasionally someone will try to have a particular conference activity financed separately, such as a speaker of college library problems paid for only by college and special section members; a dance paid for only by those who dance; or a puppet show paid for only by those who watch. If this sort of thing is allowed it eventually leads to a whole lot of separate conferences rather than one, unified conference.

This does not mean that differing needs cannot be accommodated. If there are large numbers with a special interest, a separate pre- or post-conference can be held. If a group wants to hold a special event which is not open to everyone, or which the conference committee does not agree to finance, the conference committee should have the option of allowing the group to hold the event if it is paid for by the group. A tendency exists, however, for those who aren't invited to the special event to feel left out and wonder why conference money was used to provide publicity, meeting space, etc., for the special event.

After any conference there will be those who will say they wish there had been more or fewer speakers, workshops, library-related programs, dances, broader subjects tackled, or whatever. The committee should do its best to provide something for everyone's needs, and some free time for people to visit and exchange ideas.

Exhibitors' needs should be considered as well. They welcome social opportunities as well as a block of time dedicated to exhibit viewing.

The only program requirements for the conference are contained in the following section from Article X of the VLA bylaws:

> "Membership meetings shall be general meetings open to all members of the Association. Membership meetings shall require a quorum of 10% of the membership to permit the transaction of business.
> A. Annual Meetings. Unless otherwise ordered by the Executive Board, there shall be an Annual Meeting of the Association. The time and place of the session shall be determined by the Board, alternating between the Northern and Southern part of the State whenever possible. Notice shall be given the members by the Secretary not less than twenty days prior to the meeting.* The Annual session shall feature at least one gen-

eral meeting and one business meeting.

*Written communications to the membership shall be considered as issued and given when they have been conveyed into the custody of the U. S. Post Office."

And the following from the VEMA bylaws:

"Article IV: Meetings. Section 1: The Vermont Educational Media Association shall meet at least twice annually. There shall be a meeting in the fall and an Annual Meeting in the spring. The time and place shall be determined by the Executive Board."

Some of the decisions which the committee must make about the program include:

Length of the Conference - Conferences have usually been two-three days long, the most common being a two-day general conference with a pre-conference the day before.

Pre- or Post-Conference - Pre-Conferences have been held on a variety of subjects, including Intellectual Freedom, Women's issues, and the use of Computers in the library. In general, a pre- or post-conference should be considered if there is one issue or theme that a large number of people would be interested in spending several hours on.

Competing Programs - One of the hard jobs facing the committee is to decide which programs will be placed in the same time slots. It is not as simple as, for example, putting a program for trustees at the same time as one for school librarians, because there are a number of individuals who are both. One approach is to schedule those programs which have a broad, general appeal by themselves, then match up the programs which will have a more limited audience with business meetings of associations or sections. This makes it possible for those who are members of more than one section or association to attend all the business meetings, and also means that there is usually one program going on for those who don't wish to attend a business meeting.

Timing - Conference committees sometimes try to adjust the schedule to accommodate those people who can only attend for one day. This can be done by putting as many programs as possible that would interest trustees on one day, for example, and those of interest to school librarians on another day. The converse of this is to try to mix the programs, and to place the best ones at the beginning and end of the conference, in order to push people into staying for the whole time. (This may backfire -- people resent being manipulated and those who can only spare one day may decide there isn't enough on any one day to bother with.) Another aspect of timing is the question of how early in the morning to start the various programs. Trustees may insist that their meeting not start until 10:00 or 10:30 to give trustees who are only coming for the day a chance to get there. Programs that start too early on the first day or run too late on the last day are likely to be interrupted by late arrivals or early departures, regardless of how good they are. A good program fairly early in the morning will attract more people as a general rule, than the same meeting late in the day. Also, no one group should consistently have the last program time slot each year; it should be rotated.

Fund Raising - Individual groups may wish to have raffles or sales. These should be encouraged as long as they do not detract from the program. Clearance should be granted by the conference committee.

Traditionally each section of VLA, VLTA, and VEMA has been responsible for at least one program each, and their own business meeting. The conference committee has generally planned the social activities, luncheon and dinner speakers, and other speakers and programs. On occasion, one of the sponsoring organizations has taken responsibility for a major speaker. Close coordination of this effort is necessary in order to have a balanced program result.

The section and organization representatives should develop two or three possible programs to discuss at conference committee meetings. The committee as a whole determines the priorities of which programs each should pursue based upon costs and overall conference appeal, taking into consideration the unique needs of the sponsoring organizations and sections. The representatives should notify the chair as soon as a program is confirmed or if, in the case of a negative reply, an alternative program is being pursued.

The program planners are responsible for:

1. a budget for each program s/he is planning;

2. a brief description of the program being planned;

3. arranging for someone to introduce and close the program within the time scheduled, and make announcements if necessary;

4. arranging for someone to check room arrangements, equipment, ventilation, etc., just before the scheduled program and to solve any problems with the help of the local arrangements person;

5. determining what physical arrangement is needed, what special equipment is needed, and conveying same to local arrangements person;

6. arranging for someone to open the discussion period if one is planned;

7. sending an invitation to participants, including the purpose of the conference, when and where it will be held, the sponsoring groups, a description of the anticipated audience, the type and length of presentation desired, the amount of honorarium, overnight, meal and transportation arrangements, permission to tape or publish the presentation, and arrival time; and

8. arranging for a thank you letter to be sent following conference.

A session sheet (such as the sample attached) may be useful. It is possible that one or two supplemental, emergency programs could be prepared in case one of the regularly scheduled programs falls through at the last minute.

SESSION SHEET

To be filled out for each program scheduled

Date

Time

Room Location

Topic

Program Planner

Program Presenter

Procedure, Format

Materials Needed

Equipment Needed

Room Arrangement

Expected Number of Participants

Costs for Each:

- Honorarium
- Registration
- Mileage
- Meals
- Rooms

EXHIBITS AND EXHIBITORS

The fees paid to the Conference for the rights to exhibit products and offer services bring in a tremendous portion of the revenue of the Annual Conference. Without the strong support and extensive participation of the exhibitors, our Conference as we know it could not be held. We have about 30 companies as exhibitors each year, with products of interest to many types of libraries.

Exhibitors' Representative

A. The exhibitors' representative must be on the Conference committee and must be appointed fully 12 months ahead of the Conference (May of the preceding year in the timeline). The exhibitors' representative is a crucial member of the Conference committee, and must be invited to and included in all committee meetings and activities. It is highly desirable that the person be an exhibitor deeply involved in the commercial sector of the library world. S/he would fully understand the needs and points of view of exhibitors.

B. Contacts potential exhibitors with dates, times, prices for exhibit space, and prices for room accommodations.

   Using his/her own knowledge of the commercial world, or using the list from the previous year as a starting point, the exhibitors' representative arranges well in advance (at least six months prior to the Conference on the time-line) for the companies who will be exhibitors at our Conference.

   Concerning dates, the exhibitors' representative can alert the Conference committee of other potentially conflicting conferences in the region that would take exhibitors away from our Conference.

   Prices for exhibit space must be worked out by the exhibitors' representative in relation to the going rate in the region, the needs of the Conference itself, and any other pertinent factors. Price reductions might be considered for exhibitors responsible for bringing in other exhibitors or for paying for space two months or more in advance.

C. Contacts affiliated associations, agencies, or interest groups in the state for their exhibit requirements of facilities and space (NELA, NEEMA, AECT, VLA, VEMA, VLTA).

D. Devises the registration form that will be used for items "B" and "C" above to confirm the space needs, exhibit location requirements, special electrical or telephone requirements, and an official signature of commitment to exhibit and follow the schedule and program specifications of the Vermont Conference.

E. Collects fees for exhibit space and turns money over to Conference treasurer.

F. Checks facility to assure satisfaction for special requirements. The exhibitors' representative MUST have a very strong voice in the selection/approval process for the site of the Conference. If the exhibitors are not happy with the site, they may not come and the Conference will suffer.

G. Insures that exhibitors are on the list of those to receive a Conference packet.

H. Prepares chart of assigned exhibitor locations. The exhibitors' representative scouts the exhibits facility, draws up a floor plan of the available space with tables, and s/he actually assigns the spaces to the companies based on several factors:

1. how much the company paid in fees;
2. the nature of the product or service being offered; and
3. the pattern of traffic flow and its possible relation to the product or service being offered, etc.

I. Arrives before first exhibitors are scheduled to begin arriving. Many exhibitors arrive a day early, or at least a half day early, so that the exhibitors' representative must be nearly the first person to appear at the Conference site. S/he must direct and facilitate the arrival, placement, and set-up of all exhibits and the exhibits personnel.

J. Supervises set-up and oversees entire operation during Conference. The exhibitors' representative must help with all the details of set-up and must be ready to help resolve problems as the Conference goes along. Some conferences have an exhibitors' party when set-up is completed.

K. Prepares list of exhibitors to be used in Conference promotional material or in hand-outs at the Conference registration. This list should be given to the Conference Chair as early as possible for printing and distribution at Conference or with conference packet advanced mailing if at all possible. This list should contain company name and address, and name of company representative who will be working in the exhibit at the Conference. This list is important for many reasons:

1. excellent public relations;
2. a gesture of good-will and welcome toward the exhibitors indicating their fully-recognized and publicized participation in the Conference; and
3. a guide and reminder for conferees to visit the exhibits.

L. Arranges coverage for exhibitors to ease their day at lunch breaks and other times.

M. Insures that exhibitors stay until declared closing. So often when time seems to drag in the waning hours of the Conference, exhibitors wish to leave early. A strong exhibitors' representative will forestall this by establishing a firm agreement from the start by way of the completed exhibitors' registration form and by good working arrangements ahead of time.

N. Assures that the exhibit area is left in clean and neat condition in compliance with the procedures of the management of the Conference site. This final responsibility cannot be overlooked -- the exhibitors' representative must be the last person to leave the exhibit area, making sure that all is left in order.

O. Conclusion of exhibits business with Conference Chair. Obviously, with such a tremendous responsibility, the exhibitors' representative has been in close continual contact with the Conference Chair. All final business must be handled with the Conference Chair on the last day of the Conference or at a mutually agreed upon follow-up meeting.

P. In conjunction with the rest of the Conference committees:

1. determines times exhibitors will be at exhibits;
2. prices for exhibit space; and
3. which exhibitors get free space (i.e. VLA, NELA, AECT).

In conjunction with the local arrangements person:

1. assures availability of tables, chairs, etc;
2. coffee near exhibit area;
3. security of exhibits; and
4. prepares list of confirmed exhibitors in time for mailing with program packet.

Consideration of Exhibitors

Care should be taken to avoid as much as possible the showing of favoritism for one commerical exhibitor over another, and especially to avoid endorsing or appearing to endorse a particular product. Exhibitors rightfully expect to be treated equally and fairly, and resent it if one of their number manages to receive special treatment from a moderator or chair.

In return for their expenditure of money and time, the exhibitors should be given a fair chance to make some sales. Various gimmicks, such as an exhibitors "show and tell," have been tried to draw attention to the exhibits, but the best plan seems to be to insure them a prominent location in the traffic pattern and allow enough free time between meetings, or a block of time before lunch, especially for people to visit them.

FINANCES

The finances of the Conference should be carefully planned in order to minimize the chances of a deficit, and to prevent problems with the guests or participating organizations. The Conference committee should prepare and approve a tentative budget before November 1st of the year prior to the Conference. Five percent should be reserved for contingencies. All financial policies should be determined early and communicated to all concerned.

Financial reports of past conferences may provide useful information for decisions.

A. Status of extra fund-raising activities. Revenues from raffles, silent auctions, etc., normally do not go into the Conference fund, but the specific activities should be approved by the Conference committee to avoid conflicts with conference activities.

B. Which participants, guest speakers, panel members, etc., will have which fees, rooms, meals, mileage, honoraria, etc., paid by the Conference? Will members of sponsoring organizations be treated the same as outside speakers in this regard? Are alcoholic beverages paid for for guests? When will the fees or reimbursements be paid? The best way to build good will and thank a speaker is to hand him/her a check for honorarium and travel expenses as s/he is preparing to leave the Conference.

C. Registration Fees. Registration fees, the add-on for rooms and meals, and the exhibitors' fees are the income sources for the Conference. Usually different registration fees have been charged for members, non-members, exhibitors and guests. The committee may decide to waive registration fees for those members who are presenting programs at the Conference in lieu of an honorarium.

D. Rooms and Meals Costs. Once costs for meals and rooms are obtained from the facility manager, the Conference committee determines what amount will be added to these costs in order to cover the costs of speakers, etc. This has been in the range of 25-50¢ per meal and $1.00 per room. If single rooms are to be discouraged, the differential for them may be increased.

Duties of the Treasurer

Any member of the Conference committee or the Treasurers of any of the sponsoring organizations may serve as Treasurer. The Treasurer should:

1. be a member of the Conference committee;
2. arrange for travel reimbursement requests to be placed in reservation envelopes for each speaker;
3. work closely with Conference committee in budget preparation;
4. obtain in advance an itemized list of all Conference expenses, including all speaker's honoraria from Conference chair;
5. arrange an accountability system for all expenditures. Vouchers and/or receipts might be used;

6. receive at the close of the Conference all conference receipts including exhibitors' fees, a list of all Conference registrants and all travel reimbursement requests;
7. deposit all Conference receipts in a separate Conference account;
8. make appropriate disbursements by check according to chair's list of expenses, bill from facility management, and travel reimbursement requests;
9. set deadlines for submission of all expense vouchers and a date by which all bills will be paid;
10. determine the net profit for the Conference. In 1980 this will be divided among VLA, VLTA and VEMA according to the proportion of members each organization registers for the Conference. In 1979 the VLA Board voted that starting in 1981 any profit or loss will be absorbed by a Joint Conference Fund; and
11. prepare a Treasurer's report for the Executive Boards of the sponsoring organizations and be prepared to answer questions dealing with finances.

HOSPITALITY

One person, not necessarily a member of the Conference committee, is designated as hospitality person. To welcome guests, dignitaries, and speakers or program leaders, a hospitality person must see to the details of proper ammenities and protocol for the Conference. This person must begin work about two months before the Conference in order to be aware of all program details and the wishes of the Conference planning chair.

Hosting

In connection with the Conference planning chair, the hospitality person handles the following:

A. Arranging for a specific host/hostess for each guest, and making such each host/hostess has all the details of the person s/he is to greet. A note sent in advance to the guest would be most appropriate and desirable if at all possible. A list of guests should be given to registration desk and appropriate materials provided at reservation desk in evelopes for each guest.

B. Arranging transportation to and from airport, bus or train station, etc., if necessary.

C. Obtaining meal tickets for guests and determining how pre-meal drinks (at cash-bar cocktail gatherings) will be handled for guests.

D. Greeting as many people personally upon their arrival as is possible, or being absolutely certain that individual host/hostess handles this responsibility.

E. Knowing the layout of the entire Conference facility to help guests find the places they need.

F. Seeing that guests are aware of seating for meals and that they know what is expected of them. A letter of invitation to sit at the head table or at a reserved table must be sent or presented to each guest of honor, with provision for guests to acknowledge the invitation well in advance of the appointed meal.

G. Arranging for guests to arrive at meals feeling welcomed and assured and guided easily to their places and promptly for a smooth and pleasant start.

Introductions

In connection with the Conference planning chair and the program planners, the hospitality person determines which "VIPs" will be attending and arranges for appropriate introductions to be made at Conference functions and meals. (These people may include State Librarian, State Library Board members, Presidents of Regional Associations, or other State organizations, etc.) The hospitality person gathers appropriate data about each VIP to be sure each is introduced properly. Individual program speakers and leaders will be introduced by their respective program planners at those meeting times.

Announcements

The hospitality person could coordinate and facilitate announcements before each large group meeting or meal by seeking these out and preparing them for presentation in easy-to-read form. Availability of this "announcement" service must be "advertised" by the hospitality person from the start of the Conference.

Head Table Seating

This is a delicate, crucial responsibility which must be done for all Conference meals in advance of the start of the Conference, allowing only for necessary last minute changes. There is no time to do this planning, seating chart construction, and place card lettering at the Conference.

The hospitality person must:

A. Arrange seating for head tables at meals in consultation with the Conference chair and others who may have special input.

B. Arrange reserved seating for those who should be honored but for whom there isn't room at the head table. These honorable persons might include presiding officers of sponsoring associations, program organizers, exhibitors offering special participation, etc.

C. Prepare the seating chart (extremely important) and carefully letter names on attractive place cards. The place cards must be put in seating arrangement order in an envelope for each meal and, if possible, the hospitality person should place these cards personally at the correct locations on the head table to avoid any errors. This is to insure that the seating chart, which is given ultimately to the speaker making introductions, matches the order in which the guests are actually sitting at the tables.

D. It is always wise to be prepared for last minute changes or drop-outs.

Flowers

The hospitality person arranges for flowers at the head tables, and also arranges for flower corsages for very special guests if it is the wish of the Conference planning committee. The local arrangements person could be consulted for this task, but the hospitality person should not overlook this detail.

General Hospitality

The hospitality person must be ready to help with needs and minor problems of guests, and must be at their disposal to make their stay enjoyable. The Conference chair will often have to rely on the hospitality person, and the two should work closely together to make the days run smoothly.

Words of Appreciation

The hospitality person must see that timely thanks are offered at appropriate times, and that proper acknowledgement is given to all those who made the Conference happen. Such comments are particularly appropriate at the close of the Conference, but are not limited to this time.

PUBLICITY

The publicity person should cover:

I. Vermont Library Media - VLA News, VEMA News, DOL News by:

A. Keeping editors informed.

B. Sending a copy of the logo to be used whenever Conference information appears.

C. Doing a short, zippy article with pictures for each newsletter, January through April.

D. Arranging for reporters to cover each Conference program to provide post-Conference news articles.

II. Professional Organizations and Journals - Library Journal and School Library Journal, Wilson Library Bulletin, NELB Owl, NEEMA Views, NELA Newsletter, AECT, ALA, ALTA, AASL by:

A. Sending notices of dates and contact person out well in advance (January) of the Conference.

B. Contacting Vermont representative of the national and regional organizations to see what other publicity might be appropriate.

III. Vermont Press by:

A. Trying to involve a newspaper features writer in the Conference, especially when authors or celebrities visit.

B. Preparing a press release which participants can fill out to be sent to weekly papers following the Conference.

C. Sending press releases with pictures in advance to the local newspapers of those people who are actively involved in the Conference planning or presentations.

D. Working with the publicity chairpeople of sponsoring organizations and the Conference committee on other ideas for media-worthy events in conjunction with annual meetings or the Conference.

IV. Photography

Have good black and white photos taken to be used for the June VLA News and/or newspapers.

PACKET AND HANDOUTS

I. Packet

A member of the Conference committee must take responsibility for preparing and mailing the packet. Obviously help will be required.

The Conference committee must decide:

A. To whom the packet will be sent. Some years the packet has been sent only to the paid-up members of the sponsoring organizations. A flyer was mailed to other librarians, trustees, and libraries. Other years packets have been mailed to everyone possible. The following groups or mailing lists should be considered:

1. paid-up members of sponsoring organizations;
2. exhibitors registered for space;
3. recently lapsed members of sponsoring organizations;
4. all public and college library staffs;
5. all those on the Department of Education Library Personnel Directory (includes a contact person for each Vermont school);
6. all library trustees;
7. all public, college, special libraries; and
8. Department of Libraries' mailing list which includes state agencies, chairpeople of boards of trustees, legislators, all public, college, special and institutional libraries.

B. What should be included in the packet.

1. program;
2. map of site showing parking;
3. directions on reaching site by various means of transportation;
4. car pooling information;
5. sheet of instructions;
6. child care forms;
7. flyer to be passed on to a colleague;
8. list of exhibitors;
9. telephone number at which participants can be reached in an emergency;
10. annual reports of sponsoring organizations (have not been included the last few years); and
11. membership forms for all three organizations.

Preparation of the packet requires approximately 60 hours. Typing and copying require about 40 hours; collating, stapling and stuffing require about 20 hours. Envelopes are pre-printed with the schedule on one side and the mailing permit on the reverse.

Mailing labels are prepared from membership lists of the sponsoring organizations and the other lists which the committee decides to use. It is possible that the organizations can supply labels instead of lists. Inquire of newsletter editors and/or membership chairpeople.

The mailing permit for VLA is registered in Burlington, and VEMA's in Montpelier. Packets must be mailed from the location at which the permit is registered. Third class mail can take as long as three weeks to be delivered. Packets should be in the mail by the end of March. Two hundred items must be sent in each mailing, and items must be sorted by zip code.

If a flyer is to be sent, decide to whom it will be sent, include information on how people can obtain a packet, and make mailing arrangements. It could be sent to school principals, superintendents, library directors, and others in a position to encourage their employees to attend.

II. Handouts

Some information needs to be available for those who arrive without their packets, and for conveying new developments since the program was printed. The following have been used at past conferences:

A. A reduction of the schedule on the packet envelope printed on a 4 x 6 card. (Extra envelopes might serve the same purpose if the costs were comparable.)

B. An updated list of exhibitors or a floor plan of the exhibit area.

C. Floor plan showing meeting room locations.

D. List of those registered.

EVALUATION

The means of evaluation must be decided upon and executed. Some of the following might be used:

A. Random interviews during the Conference.

B. Questionnaire on overall Conference distributed in packet and collected at Conference.

C. Questionnaire handed out and collected at specific sessions.

D. Two assigned evaluators for each session.

E. Follow-up Conference committee session.

F. Feed-back from participants.

G. Committee meeting held during Conference by sitting together at one or two meals.

Important points to consider:

A. How to distribute.

B. How to collect.

C. Process for using evaluation.

A written final report is to be presented by the Conference chair to the Executive Boards of the sponsoring organizations for their first meeting following the Conference.